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April 19, 2016

Honorable Colleen McMahon
United States District Judge
Southern District of New York
United States Courthouse
500 Pearl Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge McMahon,

My name is Rabbi Avraham Ashville and I am the Chief Rabbi of The Congregation of Georgian Jews. In 1982, our congregation was in its infancy. Our services and celebrations were organized in a small house. Meeting the needs of a growing community, our synagogue was redesigned and rebuilt eight years later. While our robust community is comprised of many wonderful and generous individuals, one of our most eminent members is Moshe Mirilashvili.

When our synagogue was first developing, Moshe's excitement was palpable. He made it abundantly clear that the synagogue should be a symbol and an exemplar of the Georgian community. Because all of our members were recovering from the loss of their homes in Georgia, Moshe was thrilled to have a budding synagogue that signified a new American home for his community. Moshe wanted the new synagogue to serve as an accessible religious space to unify our community, and he worked tirelessly to achieve that goal. Moshe motivated new immigrants to join our congregation, he funded parts of our construction, and he welcomed members with his warmhearted temperament.

The moment I met Moshe, I was struck by his sensitivity and deep compassion for others. Many of our members turned to Moshe when they needed medical care or advice. Whether it was 3 P.M or 3 A.M and whether it was his best friend or a stranger, Moshe was always quick to offer his guidance and knowledge. He has helped many families assimilate to life in America. He provided new immigrants with moral support and assisted them in finding jobs. When Moshe had money to spare, he modestly sent it to struggling families in our community.

He is a man whose defining quality is his empathy. He is a man whose mission in life is to help others. He is a man whose identity is comprised of acts of humanity. Moshe and his family serve as a strong pillar of our community, and his absence will be deeply felt. The members and leaders of The Congregation of Georgian Jews see Moshe as embodiment of kindness.

Your honor, I humbly take responsibility to vouch for Moshe Mirilashvili. I speak for myself and I speak on behalf of my community when I ask for leniency and clemency. Please know that our congregation deeply needs him. Please know that our members profoundly rely on him. Lastly, please know that the lights of our sanctuary will be feeble and dim until Moshe's smile will illuminate it once again.

I thank you for your time, I rely on your compassion, and I trust your wisdom.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Avraham Ashville

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rabbi Avraham Ashville".

